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THE LOST ART AT CLASSICAL SEMINARIES.

AMONG the many wrongs that I suffered during my school-time—a period which it is only the poets who venture to misrepresent as agreeable—I set down as the most mischievous this wrong, that my handwriting was ruined. The seminary at which I was a pupil was unfortunately a Classical or Fashionable one. No young gentleman was supposed to be in a position that so vulgar an accomplishment as caligraphy could possibly become necessary to him in after-life. If you gave them the ideas and a dictionary, there were few of us who had not the 'faculty divine' of constructing Latin verses; but as for the hand in which they were transcribed—you might think it had been an ingenious effort of our little toes. In a school preparatory for Eton, however, such learning as how to write was no more to be expected than the art of book-keeping by double entry, and therefore Parents and Guardians were not disappointed. Once in a term, indeed, we each indited an epistle to our friends at home, under the surveillance of Dr Swishem and his crew of ushers; but it was felt on all hands to be a very unsuccessful affair. The composition, it is true, was elaborate and ornate, and about as unlike what a Boy would write, if left to himself, as can be conceived.

MY DEAR [M. or P.]—I write to inform you that the school-term will be completed on the 29th inst., upon which day, please to make arrangements for sending for me, if you can conveniently. Dr and Mrs Swishem request me to convey to you their best compliments. Hoping you are in good health, I remain, dear [M. or P.], your Affectionate Son.

It would not be credited by Messrs Piesse and Lubin, perfumers, how execrably those 'holiday letters' were permitted (in so fashionable a seminary) to smell of india-rubber. But the fact is that not only had the parallel lines, without which our communications would have been more or less diagonal, to be rubbed out, but also an immense amount of dirt, produced by tears, perspiration,

jacket-cuffs, and other matters all incident to this tremendous ordeal; not to mention that half-a-dozen blades of penknives were used up in the work of erasures. The delicate manner (we called it 'gingerly') in which the second *r* in 'arrangements' (omitted in the original) was inserted by the doctor himself, in as good an imitation of the writer's own style as his sense of propriety would permit, and the final flourish in which the signature was enveloped, as at the conclusion of some pyrotechnic display, were efforts which would have excited our admiration, if boys had such a tribute to give. They were really wonderful to us, most of whose native hieroglyphics would have defied the subtilty of Colonel Rawlinson or any other decipherer who had been only accustomed to deal with cuneiform inscriptions. I say *most* of us, because some of us had been very respectable writers before we came to Dr Swishem's, and owed our subsequent failure entirely to him and his system. I myself, for instance, remember the time in my early boyhood when I could read with tolerable ease any sentence that I had once written, no matter though forty-eight hours might have intervened; whereas, as an adult, such a feat has been utterly impossible. The learned serjeant in the *Pickwick Papers* who is described as so indifferent a penman, that his best efforts could only be read by his clerk, his moderate ones by himself, and his usual ones by neither, was yet better than I; for after a day and night have elapsed, I can make absolutely nothing of my own writing. It was a 'Caligraphic Mystery' long before the Stereoscopic Company patented *theirs*; and were it not for my wife, to whom the gift of interpretation has been revealed, and who copies out all my manuscripts for the press, the general public would know nothing of their favourite author. But stay, I am anticipating. It was never supposed at Minerva Lodge that any pupil would subsequently so far degrade himself, and it, as to endeavour to make a living by his pen. The possibility of such a misfortune—to do my revered master justice—never entered into the doctor's brain. We were all country gentlemen's sons, and

it was hoped that we should remain in that position of life in which it had pleased Providence to start us.

But even a country gentleman has sometimes to write an invitation, and even an Address to his Constituents, if he aspires to sit in St Stephen's (and does not get it written by somebody else), and therefore I contend that Dr Swishem should have taught us how to write. Perhaps he imagined, as the advocates of classical education maintain in the case of History, Geography, and the Modern Languages, that Writing is too contemptible a subject for the intellect of youth to grapple with, and may be safely left for subsequent acquisition. But, at all events, he need not have spoiled 'the hands' of those who *had* hands. This, however, was effected most completely by his system of punishment by Impositions. If I was caught 'out of bounds,' or eating sausages in bed, or putting slate-pencil into a keyhole, or (worse than all) if nature, overburdened by an early dinner, gave way during the doctor's sermon, and I fell asleep at church, there ensued an imposition; that is, I was compelled to copy out, from a classical author, a certain amount of lines, varying from a hundred to one thousand. In the case of a very flagrant outrage—swigging the doctor's table 'ale' (it never wore Mr Baes's triangle, I am certain) upon the sly—I say, in the case of that depraved young gentleman, Maltworm *minor*, I have known an imposition of *Two Thousand Lines* of the poet Virgil to be set in punishment. There was not much in common between Dr S. (who was a foolish little round man, given up to heraldry) and the bard of Mantua, but they were always hereby connected in our minds, and hated with an equal rancour. How our fingers scurried over those odious hexameters, until they grew stiff and sore, and refused to form the letters! How we scratched and scrawled, and dug into the paper, with those execrable steel pens! What strange inventions were made use of (though never patented) to shorten the cruel mechanical toil—surely almost as bad as the Crank of our model prisons—by tying half-a-dozen pens together, and imputing the vice of repetition where our author had never been suspected of it before!

In short, although of the positive results of my education at Minerva Lodge I have but little to boast (for I soon forgot how to compose Latin verses), that little was more than balanced by the fact, that my handwriting was utterly ruined by its Imposition system. Excessive speed was the only virtue which it nourished in the way of penmanship; we soon got to write 'running-hands.' But as for the art of writing, as a means of communicating information to others, it lapsed altogether, and was lost from amongst us, as completely as the method of staining glass is said to have disappeared from the whole human family.

'Spirit-hands,' to judge from the few specimens of the penmanship of the other world with which we have been favoured, are not particularly adapted for setting 'copies,' and, indeed, much

remind one of the wanderings of a spider, recently escaped from an ink-pot; but 'spirit-hands' are as copperplate specimens of calligraphy compared to my hand. To people who can't spell, a bad handwriting is some advantage; for in cases of doubt—such as, whether the *i* or the *e* come first in Believe or Receive—they have only to make their customary scrawl, and the possible error becomes undiscoverable; but the nature of my profession has compelled me to acquire this accomplishment (no thanks to Dr Swishem), and I have rarely any occasion for concealment.

There was one person who discovered ground for congratulation upon this my shortcoming, and only one. He was a gentleman who lived a life of leisure, and he confessed that my letters gave him greater pleasure than those of other friends, because they 'lasted him so long.' The first day upon which he received one, he would discover, after half-a-dozen perusals, a glimmering of what was intended to be conveyed; the next day, some interesting detail would crop out; and by the end of a week, if some sentence did not emerge with a flash which altered the entire complexion of the affair, he found himself (with the assistance of his family, and any ingenious friend who happened to be enjoying his hospitality) in possession of all that I had wished to say. But this gentleman's case was an exceptional one. When my wife was unable to copy my deathless works, the Compositors murmured and rebelled. They only knew English, they said; not Sanscrit. My *Essay on the Assyrian Bull*, for instance, with some Remarks on its Treatment under Rinderpest, as suggested by the Nineveh 'Friezes,' cost my publisher seventy pounds in printer's charges for 'erasures and alterations' alone. I am so ashamed of my own performance, that I dare not save my fingers by employing a 'multiplying machine' even for business-letters. My small children make me blush for my inferiority when they shew me their 'pothooks and hangers,' and I shall not easily forget that moment of embarrassment, when one of them, in the absence of her governess, asked me to set her 'a copy.' 'Dear papa, please write me out a line of Rs.' I could as easily have written down the genealogy of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Even the two ingenious 'blind men' at the Post-office were unable to decipher me except by mutual consultation. My envelopes took ten times the period that other illegibles did in passing through their hands. They doubtless puzzled over the efforts of all those who had, like myself, been educated at Minerva Lodge, but the profession of literature—the trade of the constant scribbler—had in my case so thoroughly completed the evil which Impositions had begun, that I was *facile princeps* among even them: the most infamous of all bad writers. Literature needs have no such effect as this, if the previous training has been good. Some foolish persons think it is a mark of genius to write ill, but this is a great mistake. I look over my own epistolary treasures, and see with shame how quite otherwise is the case.

Place aux dames. This neat little microscopic hand, every letter of which is legible, belongs to the authoress of *Our Village*; and these bold and well-formed lines are from the same fingers which wrote *Deerbrook* and the *Crofton Boys*.

This free and manly hand (the best I know) is that which set down the *Domestic Annals of Scotland*; and this, perhaps the next best, so firm, distinct, and yet so flowing, is the same which has

moved mankind at will to tears and laughter, from the days of *Pickwick* until now. To judge by this bold running-hand, the *Woman in White* was no Dead Secret to the printer; and here is the clear legible work of those dead fingers which shall paint, alas, no *Colonel Newcomes* for us any more.

Had I possessed the genius of all these writers combined, I should yet have been as one who preaches in an unknown tongue, edifying no Reader (and least of all 'the Reader' who is employed by the printer), but for the fair Interpreter of whom I have spoken; and even she was useless to me in some things. There are letters which one cannot get one's wife to write for one; and my correspondents grew rebellious, and threatened to cut off all communication with one who gave them so much trouble. A business-friend in the City, declaring that 'my telegraph-hand was much better than my writing-hand,' insisted upon hearing from me by the wires only. Finally, a 'round-robin' was addressed to me from the members of my own family, requesting that I should take writing-lessons of a professor, and enclosing thirty shillings to defray his charges for the first six lessons. I make it a rule never—under any circumstances—to return people's money, and, at the same time, I am too well-principled not to apply what I receive to the purpose for which it is intended. At the age of forty-five, therefore, I began to learn that science which I had acquired at eight years old, and lost during my residence at Minerva Lodge.

'Impositions, eh?' remarked the professor as soon as he set eyes upon a specimen of what the painters would call my 'latest style.'

'Yes,' said I, 'that was the beginning of it; but Literature was the finishing school.'

'Don't believe it, sir,' returned he, 'I have had hundreds of adult pupils, who all write like this—only certainly not quite so badly. Not one school-boy out of ten who has been brought up on classical principles can write a legible hand. The head-masters ought to be flogged all round.'

'Or even where the boys are flogged,' suggested I; but he didn't understand this allusion.

'You will require to take a dozen lessons instead of six, sir,' continued he severely.

And he spoke within the mark, for before I left his establishment, *cured*, I had to take eighteen. I consider that if the law of England was framed upon equitable principles, it would enable me to 'recover' the sum of four pounds ten shillings from the executors of the late Dr Swisshem; but I need not say that such is not the case.

My friends, of course, with the exception of the Gentleman of Leisure, were delighted with the result attained; and the compositors who have the pleasure of setting up this paper can scarcely believe their eyes. But I am by no means altogether freed from the consequences of my late deformity (for that's the very word). A most respectable tradesman, to whom I gave my first cheque after this wondrous change, was, upon presenting it in person at my banker's, at once taken into custody upon the charge of forgery. He has brought an action against the firm for defamation of character, and I am subpoenaed as a witness in the Central Criminal Court. My old cheque-book will be there produced, and the signatures (?) contrasted with the way which I have recently acquired—including a beautiful flourish like an Eagle—of subscribing my name. It will

not, therefore, be necessary to humiliate myself by further confessions, since, for the culmination of this sad history, readers may consult the public papers for themselves.

THE SHEEP-PASTURES OF SWITZERLAND.

ABOVE the mountain-ranges appropriated to the cows as their summer domain, rise another tier of heights, which are only reached by such rugged and impracticable paths, that the horned cattle, accustomed as they are to climb the mountain-sides, dare not attempt their ascent. Jagged peaks, steep precipices, tiers of naked rocks, overhanging unfathomable depths, are the principal features they exhibit. Yet even amid this wild heterogeneous array of nature, the earth is not entirely barren; firs and other hardy shrubs ornament the steep slopes, and fringe the edges of the summits. These acclivities are recognised as the Schaf Alpen; and here, regardless of fear, the sheep and goats make paths for themselves across the slippery rocks, and browse upon such stunted vegetation as they may find there. For at least nine months in the year, these Alps are not available for either sheep or goats, being entirely carpeted with thick snow; and it is only in the beginning of July that it melts in those parts most exposed to the sun, and the shepherds are able to mount with their flocks. Even then, the verdure is very weak and straggling, and the plants quickly run to seed, concentrating all their strength in the roots, which sink deeply into the moist earth. The different species found in these elevations are represented by dwarf varieties; even some of the trees, which are also found in the peat-grounds of Lapland, hardly attaining the height of a few inches. The only habitations found on these solitudes are the slanting-roofed chalets, constructed for the use of the shepherds; and these are so far apart, that it often happens a peasant will go up for the summer with the sheep committed to his care, and remain at his post for weeks without seeing any human being. There is no shelter provided for the sheep, except that which nature affords; and in bad weather, they may be seen crouching together under overhanging rocks, and in crevices or sheltered nooks, waiting till the fury of the storm has passed over.

In the Bernese Oberland, at the foot of the giant mountain Eiger, whose white head rises about nine thousand feet above the sea, there is a well-known sheep Alp, very difficult of access, and lying at a great distance from the Valley of Grindelwald. Here the shepherds annually conduct their flocks, and remain for two months isolated from the rest of the world, their only visitors being those occasional travellers who attempt the difficult path of the Straleck, which lies over the surrounding glaciers. In some spots, the sheep are entirely left to themselves, and scramble at will over crag and slope, becoming as wild as ever they were before they were made serviceable to man; the only provision made for their need being a supply of salt, which

some hardy peasant periodically carries up to them. This abandonment of the flocks happens in the pastures of the valley of the Zermatt, and above the grand glaciers of Alsech. Amid the Alpine pastures devoted to sheep, some are so extensive that several thousands of these animals find nourishment on their heights. An excellent idea of the value and size of these sheep Alpages may be had by taking the Gaulischaferg, in L'Urthenthal, as a specimen. Here a large revenue is gained from the tax on the flocks sent to graze there.

Although sheep form one of the sources of profit to Switzerland, feeding as they do off almost inaccessible vegetation, and furnishing in return both butcher-meat and coarse wool, which fetches a fair market-price, they are not made the subject of much special care by agriculturists, and consequently their race presents nothing remarkable in fineness or beauty of breed. There has latterly been an attempt to improve the breed by crossing it with that of other countries; but the rigorous lives and unsheltered weather to which these animals are exposed on the heights, and the little attention they can receive when there, prevents much success. The valley of Frütiger alone stands out as an exception in sheep-farming results; here the race is of a decidedly superior kind, and the wool of a finer and better description. This is carded and prepared by the peasants themselves, who use it for their winter-clothing. The extent of the high pastures is generally proportionate to that of those below; not so, however, in the canton of the Grisons, for in most parts of this country, the valleys are very contracted, whilst the plateaux on the heights are extensive. For this reason, the inhabitants, not being able to feed, for lack of hay, during winter, as many animals as they could nourish on the heights in summer, adopt the alternative of letting out the pasture-lands to the Bergamesque shepherds of the province of Lombardy, who lead their sheep to the Swiss Alps during the short time that these promise to afford them food. To arrive on these Alps, the shepherds and their flocks have to pass through the valley of Engadine, in the Grisons, one of the highest inhabited valleys on the Alps, being sixty miles in length, and its elevations varying from 3234 to 5600 feet. This valley is surrounded by icy barriers in the form of tremendous glaciers, and at its highest parts, possesses a most ungenial climate. Its soil is hard, and crops of barley, rye, and grain are very stunted and limited, yet, from the wealth derived from the sheep-pastures above, it ranks among the most opulent valleys of the Alps. It is celebrated especially for the architecture of its houses, and the picturesque designs of its chalets. Poverty is rare among the inhabitants, and beggary unknown; whilst those who are Protestants are creditably distinguished for their morality and industry. Since they let their land to others, their own labour is not sufficiently needed at home, and the sons of the valley therefore spread themselves all over the continent, and learn many

trades, especially that of confectionary, for which they have a great liking. Many make fortunes, but invariably, when they have done so, they return to their native valley, and enrich it with their gains. At the season when the Bergamese shepherds pass through this valley with their flocks, an encounter with them is as picturesque a scene as can well be imagined.

The men who inhabit the Italian side of the Alps are in appearance a dark, scowling race, with long black hair, hanging in tangled curls around their necks; their faces, bronzed by the sun, appear under their large flapping hats, wild and fierce; their dress is a rough, brown, home-spun cloth; and over their shoulders they carry a white blanket. To judge by appearances, one might set them down as Sicilian robbers, transported for some offence to the centre glaciers of the north. Their exterior, however, belies them, for they are in reality a hardy and honest race of men; by nature, gentle and peaceable; of extremely abstemious habits, being contented with the simplest fare, and indeed living on water, pollenta, maize, and cheese of their own making. Their sheep, which they drive before them, have as little claim to beauty as themselves: lean and meagre, after a toilsome march and winter's scanty fare, with long hanging ears, they linger at every blade of herbage or vestige of food that crosses their path. A mule, laden with necessary provisions, accompanies the troop; and thus may they be seen in July, winding through the ascents and slopes of the valley of Engadine to the pastures above. There they remain for nearly three months, the shepherds frequently spending day and night in the open air with their flocks, which become considerably benefited by their summer sojourn, and return fat and fleecy at the end of September, ready to supply the important wool-market, which is held at a town called Borgofesio. It is estimated that, in the canton of the Grisons, there arrive annually in the month of July, from the province of Bergame, no less than forty-five thousand sheep, for which the commune or corporation of the valley receive one franc per head. Great damage, however, being done to the forests by the sheep nibbling the young shoots of the trees, a violent opposition is just now being made by the wood-proprietors against the invasion of these foreign troops, and already some pastures have been deserted in consequence.

Besides the sheep-pastures which we have named, there are still some few grass-plots to be found still higher, but situated on slopes so perilous, that the sheep dare not attempt to reach them. Undaunted, however, by the perils of the path, and led by the necessity to provide for the one cow, sheep, or goat which almost every peasant owns, the hardy mountaineer, scythe in hand, scales these heights, and gathers up the wild harvest (*wild heu*) which he finds between the rocky steeps. These elevations are too high for either the commune, the parish, or any other power to bring within the grasp of their rights of possession. The herbage

that grows there is public property—the prize of the industrious and the daring. There is a legal enactment that no one shall be permitted to mow the grass on these heights until the 13th July, on account of the dangers attending these *récoltes*, if the passes are attempted too soon, as well as to insure the full growth of the crop, and a fair start for the fields. But on this day in July, those who are willing to make the ascent, start with the implements of labour in their hands, and strive who shall be first on the heights, possession being the law of proprietorship; for whoever first secures a footing on the grass-plot, remains master of the field, and cuts the hay for his own special benefit. Although the competition is great, few quarrels ensue; the assistants generally start overnight, or before morning breaks over the earth; and at sunrise, each victor may be seen clinging to the height he has surmounted, and making the rock ring with the sound of his Alpine horn, or boisterously shouting forth his song of triumph, as he waves triumphantly his cap to his companions in the chase.

In order to perform their dangerous labour, these *wild heuers* have attached to their boots large iron nails, in order to prevent their feet from slipping on the rocky precipices they have to climb. When arrived at the top, they take off these boots, for perhaps there is scarcely any one danger of Alpine climbing so great as that of traversing steep grass-slopes, unless with unshod feet. But notwithstanding these and sundry other precautions, many fatal accidents occur. Sometimes, it is only by the non-appearance of a father or brother from some of these heights, that the relatives below understand that an untimely death has been the consequence of his temerity. On a spot well known to the mountaineers, three of one family, whilst helping to start the hay over the rocks, missed their footing, and were all dashed to pieces below.

It does not take much time to make the grass into hay, both from the scantiness of the crop and the dryness of the atmosphere; but when made, it is necessary to bring it down to the cattle below. If the grass-plot happens to lie on the border of a precipice, nothing is easier than to get it down. The mower binds his hay in bundles, and dragging them to the brink, he hurls them over; and then descending himself by the shortest cuts he can to the spot where the hay has fallen, repeats the process until it is near enough home to be gathered in. If the grass-plots lie far from the precipices, and are hemmed in by crags and cliffs, then the mower must place his bundles under the best shelter he can make for the occasion—probably a stone foundation, over which he piles branches of fir, for the paths by which he has ascended are far too perilous for him to descend when laden with his gains. He then returns home, and waits quietly until winter has fairly set in, when, as soon as the slopes are covered with snow, and rendered hard by the frost, the intrepid mountaineers sally forth again, laden with small wooden sledges, and tracking a path for themselves up to where their treasure lies stored, they place the bundles of hay on the sledges before them, and precipitating themselves, their vehicle, and its

burden from the declivity of the mountain, descend with the speed of an avalanche. Much risk and danger, both to life and limb, naturally attend such a mode of descent; but, nevertheless, great excitement attends these sledge expeditions, and the young men look forward to them as a favourite winter amusement. The hay, too, thus procured is much valued for the sake of the very dangers encountered in securing it.

Without these high and almost inaccessible minor Alpagoes, many would be almost beggars, and the price of sheep and goats would rise considerably. But certainly great praise is due to a class who are willing to carry their labour so far and at such a risk to maintain their independence, instead of becoming pensioners on the charity of the commune. It is estimated in Switzerland that the amount contributed by the cows on the Alpine pastures to the general milk of the country is in proportion of twenty-seven francs for every *fuchart* (an area of fourteen English yards square), without counting the nourishment likewise afforded during the summer months to one hundred thousand horses and half a million of sheep; but taking this into consideration, they may be presumed to produce nearly one hundred francs per hectare. This must be considered a large produce for land in so exceptionable a position, where vegetation is only seen during four months of the year. As in these mountain cantons the pasture-fields offer peculiarities not found elsewhere, the organisation of law rights and property have certain characteristic features which need a few words of attention.

Property is so divided in Switzerland into small proprietorships, that it is very rare to find any one pasture belonging to a single landowner. It is generally the parish, commune, or joint-proprietors who hold graduated rights over them. But there is great distinction made between such lands as belong to the parish and of those which represent the united interests of several parties.

By far the larger proportion are parish property, for there is no commune (a name corresponding with our town corporations) which does not possess a large extent of pasture-land within its rights of trust, and these are included in three distinct compartments, recognised according to the negotiations under which they are cultivated and engaged. One division is exclusively reserved for the poor, or such as are considered so, and they alone have the right to lead their cattle on these slopes to graze. This is one of the forms benevolence takes in Switzerland; and certainly, if it be a criterion of the prosperity of the country, one may envy the Swiss their social position, for if the poor need such assistance for their flocks alone, they must be far removed themselves from the misery which, in other lands, craves a dole of bread to support human life.

The engagement of the next division of the grass-lands is reserved for the members of the corporation themselves—a politic body, each of whom has the right to send on these lands such domestic animals as he keeps during the winter at his own expense. Probably this was formerly the general rule for all the inhabitants alike; but with the increase of population, the number of herds likewise increased to such a degree that rigid rules became necessary to avoid contentions, and also not to overburden the land with more animals than could find nourishment from its produce.

From this period also dates the third division of the pasturages, the different runs of which are reserved for such persons who are proprietors of a certain amount of land in the valleys. The hay-fields on the Lower Alps, and the higher pasture-lands reserved for grazing, are divided, as near as can be, into appropriate fields or districts, each of which is calculated to nourish a corresponding number of animals in winter and summer. The calculation is then made of the number of cattle possessed by each proprietor of the valley, and being known to have kept them during winter from the produce of his hay-fields, he is permitted to send the same number to graze and fatten on the rich verdure above. But in no case can he purchase in the summer and send up with them one single head of cattle more than he has had during winter, and a lynx-eyed jealousy over one another guards these rights from violation. The pasturages not being of equal richness, a strict attempt at impartiality is made, by preventing the flocks belonging to the same person from being sent to the same Alpine two following seasons. The proprietors change about, taking their turn in regular rotation for certain well-known rich pasturages; while, for fear of impoverishing the land by an unfair amount of beasts, the number of horned cattle or sheep which each field can nourish is strictly limited.

Such grass-lands as belong to private parties are also reckoned to contain a given number of cattle, and then divided according to the portion of land belonging to each co-partner, who has the option of using it himself for grazing purposes, or letting it out to his neighbours, under the same restrictions as to the quantity of animals fed on it.

The partners of a pasturage meet once a year to select a manager, and to regulate the work required to be done on the land; the Alps being each under legislative rules, to which the proprietors are bound to submit.

A practice very prevalent in many of the communes is, that no stranger in the town or village can be permitted to send his cattle on the mountains; and they excuse themselves for this apparently selfish act on the score, 'that the mountains will only receive those who belong to the valleys.' This is, on the whole, a wise principle; it is absolutely necessary to have some corresponding level of rights between the heights and the plain, for if the inhabitants of a commune were deprived of the liberty of their cattle-runs on the Alps, they would be obliged to devote their summer grass to their cows, and thus have nothing whatever on which to keep them during the winter. Hence, without all this organisation of lands, the herds would decrease, and on them depend the prosperity and well-doing of the Swiss farmers. The peasants also, without the protection they receive from the commune, would never be able to keep the cow which literally keeps them, but must emigrate, and thus the population would diminish.

The present well-digested rules keep all above want, dividing, as near as may be, the natural produce of the land according to the position of the people, so that extreme poverty can hardly exist in the mountains, since the means of providing for the necessities of life are open to all who will work.

Any cultivation that can be effected on the Higher Alps depends on the *Föhn*, or south wind, the same current of air which has its birth

in the burning sands of Sahara, and alarms the caravan travellers in Africa under the form of the *Simoom*, which subsequently passes over the Mediterranean Sea, and at certain periods enervates and lays low the Italian population, who curse it as the *Sirocco*. Travelling onwards towards the Alps, it finally spreads itself over Switzerland, where the mountaineers eagerly look for and bless its approach. The word *Föhn* is derived from the same root as the Latin word *Favonius*, whose praises Horace himself was used to sing; and it now produces the same effect as in his day, melting the accumulated snows with marvellous rapidity, which the long winter gathers in prodigious masses both on the mountain and in the valley. The instant it is felt, the air softens, tempered, as it were, by enchantment; its gentle gales blow over valley and height for four or five days consecutively, and during that time, the atmosphere is of an exquisite purity. Little by little, the thick crust of ice, which has covered the earth during winter, melts, and a thousand silvery streamlets are set in motion, which percolate through the earth, and flowing down the sides of the rocks, swell the beds of the torrents, whose waters, after a long and mournful silence, begin to flow again, and refresh, by their murmuring voice, the ear of the peasant, who then knows spring has returned. Soon the white veil is lifted from the earth, and an exquisite green verdure takes its place; bud and leaf simultaneously burst into life, and flowers open to the genial warmth, enamelling the grassy slopes. The villagers, relieving the tethered cattle from their imprisoned position, hasten with them to the heights. The *Föhn* may well be courted, for it does more in one day to melt the snow than the sun does in a week. Nor is it alone in spring that its favours are felt, for in autumn it ripens in like manner both fruit and grain, and dries, when in shade, the hay-crops and cut fruits preserved for winter use. It is quite certain that, without the aid of this wind, the mountains would retain their covering of snow winter and summer alike. The glaciers also without it must necessarily increase, and gradually swallow up the valleys beneath. At some period more or less remote, gigantic glaciers did fill the valleys of the Rhine, Rhone, Aar, and Reuss, even as far as the Jura chain of mountains, carrying before them, to immense distances, enormous blocks of stone and granite, known to geologists and travellers under the name of *Blocs erratiques*. It was the *Föhn*, the inhabitants say, which delivered Switzerland from its tomb of ice; and, at any rate, it is to this wind the country owes its rich green pastures; and it may fairly be looked upon as the good genius of this land. On the other hand, like an arbitrary power, it produces powerful ravages, blowing at times with an alarming violence over the heights, and bearing down into the southern valleys with a terrific force, snapping the stems of huge trees, raising roofs, laying bare crops, and lashing the smooth surface of the lakes into furious waves—its burning breath, at such times, dries up all vegetation, and flowers fade, plants droop, and timber cracks and takes fire at the slightest spark. From this cause, the entire town of Glarus was reduced to ashes in 1861. As soon as there is notice of its approach, in the parts most exposed to its influence, all fires are ordered to be put out, the inhabitants not even being allowed to cook their food while it lasts. These regulations

are proved to be necessary, and the people are not inclined to dispute them, for they gain too much benefit from the Föehn not to humour and succumb to its anger for the short time it lasts.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XX.—MR WITHERS WITHDRAWS HIMSELF.

WHEN Derrick and the captain met at the breakfast-table upon that Derby morning, there was a note for the latter waiting by his plate. It had been brought over from the *Turf Hotel* with apologies, having been detained there by mistake, 'through everybody being so busy,' for at least a week. As he turned it moodily over without opening it, Ralph saw that it had the Mirk postmark.

'You have a letter from home I see, lad; lucky dog!'

'Yes, very lucky,' replied the young man cynically, as he ran his eye over the contents; 'worse than my infernal luck of last night, and only less than the misfortune I am looking for to-day is the news in this letter.'

'How is that, lad?'

'Well, you will hear some day.'—Here he took the note, and slowly tore it lengthways into thin strips, and then across, so that it lay in a hundred fragments.—'But it's a secret, at least it was until a week ago, but being in a woman's hands, of course she let it slip; and Master Walter looked as near to 'ugly' as it was possible for his handsome face to go.

'I fancied your folks at home were unaware of your having intended to be at the *Turf Hotel*, and rather thought you were with your regiment, like a good boy.'

The captain returned no answer; but Derrick, who was in excellent spirits notwithstanding the anxieties of the coming day, continued to address him in that healthy and cheerful strain which is the most intolerable of all manners to one who is melancholy, and what is worse, in dread suspense. 'Now, for my part, Walter, any letter in a woman's hand, as I think yours is—nay, you foolish lad, if you hadn't stuffed it into your breast-pocket so quickly, I protest I should have thought it had come from your mother or your sister. Why, you don't mean to say that that pretty little gate-keeper down at Mirk writes letters to handsome Master Walter?'

'And why not?' asked the captain defiantly. 'If it had come from Mistress Forest, then, indeed, you might have taken upon yourself to object, although I understand that even there you have not yet obtained the position of bridegroom-elect.'

'No,' returned Derrick drily. 'I was about to say that I should have welcomed any letter in a woman's hand, especially if it began: "My dearest"—'

'What the devil do you mean by looking over my letter?' exclaimed Master Walter, starting up in a fury.

'Nothing,' answered the other, purple with laughter and muffin; 'I never dreamed of such a thing. But since you said it came from the gate-keeper's daughter, I thought I'd make a shot. The idea of my wanting to read all the pretty things the little fool writes to a wicked young dog like you; it's no fun to me to watch a moth at a candle. But what a spoiled lad it is! Why, here

I have had no letter at all from Mirk, and yet I am content. Silence gives consent, they say; and particularly in this case, when I know nothing but your lady-mother prevents Mary writing "My dearest Ralph" to me. Indeed, if she wrote "Dear sir, I can have no more to do with you," it would not have the smallest effect. What I have made up my mind to do, generally comes to pass. Where there's a *will*—that is, supposing it is strong enough—there is most times a *way*.'

'I know you're a devil of a fellow,' sneered Master Walter, rising and gazing out of window at the bustling street already astir with the Derby vehicles; 'but I am afraid your *will* can't win me this race.'

'It's done a great deal towards it, Captain Lisgard. It brought about the trial-race with the "crack," although my Lord did give himself such cursed airs, and not only let you in for a good thing, but lent you the money to take advantage of it to the uttermost.'

'That's true,' said Walter frankly, and holding out his thin white hand. 'I daresay you think me an ungrateful beast, but I'm worried by a matter that you know nothing of; besides'—

'Not another word, lad—not another word; I am a rude rough creature, and I said some unpleasant things myself.—Here is our Hansom, and with light-green curtains of gauze. I'm cursed if I go down to Epsom with the colours of *The King* on my cab. Why, the beggar must have done it to insult us.'

'Stuff and nonsense, Ralph; it's only to keep off the dust. If you have no curtains, you must wear a veil, that's all. Look there, in yonder barouche-and-four, every man has a green veil on. By Heaven! that Wobegon's one of 'em. He's got my L.O.U. for fifteen hundred pounds in his waistcoat-pocket; and there's that ugly devil Beamish, too.—Well,' muttered the captain to himself, 'I'm glad I didn't go with that party, at all events.'

Master Walter, who was as popular in town as elsewhere, had been asked to take a seat for that day in half-a-dozen 'drags' and barouches, but he had preferred to go alone with Derrick; not that he enjoyed his companionship, but because, as I have before said, he gathered some comfort from his society under the present cloud of anxiety and apprehension.

'I say, Walter, you are a pretty fellow; you forgot all about the provisions, but see here!' cried Derrick triumphantly, pulling a hamper from under the sofa; 'a pigeon-pie, a fowl, two bottles of champagne, and one of brandy!'

'What confounded nonsense!' returned the young man peevishly. 'There are dozens of parties who would have given us lunch. The idea of a hamper on the top of a Hansom!'

'Well, come, you are wrong anyway, *there*, lad, for I have seen a dozen going by this morning.'

'Very likely, and you have also seen plenty of vans, each with a barrel of ale. However, it's of no consequence. If the Frenchman wins, I could eat periwinkles out of a hand-barrow with a hair-pin; and if he loses—why, then, I shall not have much appetite.'

'Look here, lad,' replied Derrick gravely, 'this sort of thing won't do. Never be down on your luck, until, at all events, your luck is down upon you. You are not cut out for this work, I can see. A man ought to be sanguine—yet cool; hopeful of gain—yet quite prepared for loss, who goes in for

such a stake as you have got upon to-day's race. A gambler should be all brain, and no heart: let me suggest, before we start, that you should just take a little brandy.'

'No, no!' ejaculated the captain impatiently. 'If I am a funk, as you so delicately hint, I am not a fool. Come, let's be off. The next time I see this room again, I shall be a made man—or a beggar.'

To any man, who risks by betting more than he can conveniently spare, the going to the Derby is by no means a cheerful expedition, whatever his coming home may chance to be; and further, it may be observed, that of all professional persons, those who take up the Turf as their line in life, are the most sombre and unlively. Many of them are clever fellows enough, and one or two are honest men, but there is no such thing as fun among them. The Ring would never take to the snow-balling one another, as the stock-brokers have been known to do when 'Change was dull. They have only a certain grim and cruel humour, such as the Yankees use, the point of which lies always in overreaching one another. Derrick was right when he said that Master Walter was not fit for such a calling, but the same thing might, almost with equal force, have been said of himself. He was not, indeed, of an anxious disposition, but his temper, when once roused, was almost demoniacal, and he could never stand being cheated. Now, Cheating, in some form or other, is the soul of the turf.

Whenever it is possible to trot in that vast procession down to Epsom, the appearance of which is so gay, and the pace so funereal, the large-wheeled Hansom does it. Many a pretentious four-in-hand did the captain and Derrick pass, and many a wicked-looking brougham with its high-stepping steeds; and the occupants of each had often a word to say about 'the fellow with the beard that Lisgard had picked up, and was carrying about with him everywhere.' For the manly growth that fringed Ralph Derrick's chin was something portentous, even in these days of beards, and his appearance was rendered still more striking from the fact of his wearing an infinite number of wooden dolls in the band of his hat, where Louis XI. used to stick the images of his patron saints. In vain Walter had informed him that this was a weakness only indulged in by snobs. Ralph rejoined (but not without an extra tinge of red in his weatherbeaten cheek), that being a snob himself, it was therefore only natural that he (Ralph) should take pleasure in thus adorning himself. He had rather be a snob than a nob, by a precious sight; he knew that. As for making an exhibition of himself, if that was really the case, it was only right that the public should be advertised of the matter, so he purchased a penny trumpet, and executed thereon the most discordant flourishes. 'Say another word, lad,' added he, with cheerful malice, 'and blessed if I don't buy a false nose!'

Walter made no further remonstrance; he leaned back in the Hansom as far as he could, and as much behind the green gauze curtain, until they reached the course, when his companion divested himself of the objectionable ornaments, and made a present of a live tortoise, which he had also acquired on the way, to an importunate gipsy woman, instead of crossing her palm as requested 'with a piece of silver.' They could hear by this time the hum and the roar of the great human sea which surged about the railings in front of the

Grand Stand, and in a few minutes more they were within them. They pushed their way through the babbling throng towards a certain corner that had been agreed upon, and there was Mr Tite Chifney waiting for them, with a very pale face indeed.

'Nothing wrong with the horse, is there?' cried Ralph in a loud and menacing voice, which caused not a few sharp eyes to glance cunningly towards them, and set not a few sharp ears to listen to what might come next.

'No, sir, nothing,' returned the trainer. 'For Heaven's sake, speak low. I never saw him looking better in my life. We will see him now, if you like.'

'Where's Blanquette?' continued Ralph, a little reassured by this, as they moved away towards the Paddock.

'Mr Blanquette is not here, Mr Derrick.'

'Not here? Why, he was to join you the day before yesterday, otherwise I would have come myself.'

'He *has* been here, sir, but he's gone away again?'

'What! Is he not coming back to-day?'

'I hope so, sir; I most sincerely hope so; but the fact is—now take it quietly, for it's none of my fault—he's gone after Jack Withers.'

In an instant, while Walter ejaculated a smothered cry of agony and wrath, Derrick had seized the trainer by the throat. 'You know me, sir,' cried he. 'As I swore to treat that tout on the Downs at Mirk, so will I treat you, if that jockey!'

But two blue-coated men had thrust themselves between the strong man and his victim; a gentleman in a tight-buttoned frock-coat was coming up, too, in plain clothes, with that swift determined stride peculiar to members of 'the force,' and the crowd grew very thick about them, and a thousand eyes were being concentrated upon Ralph's furious face, he knew. If his temper was lost now, he felt that all was lost. With an effort that almost cost him a fit of apoplexy—'I am sorry,' said he, 'that I laid my hand upon you, Mr Chifney.'

'That will do,' returned the trainer quietly, arranging his neckcloth. 'Mr Inspector, you know me, and there is no occasion for your services.'

'All right, Mr Chifney, but you have got a rummish customer to deal with there,' replied the guardian of the law, stroking his chin, and looking at Derrick, much as a vice-president of the Zoological Society might regard a novelty in wild beasts, that had been half-promised to the establishment, and then withdrawn.

'I have never been treated thus,' complained the trainer, as the three moved away, and the gaping crowd gathered round some other object of attraction, 'and have never deserved such treatment from any employer of mine, although I have kept racing-stables these thirty years. I can make some allowance for one who has so much money on this horse, as I know you have, Mr Derrick, but I give you my honour and word that I was as astounded as Mr Blanquette himself, when I heard the news that Jack had skeddaddled. He was your own jockey, remember, not mine: no boy in my stables has ever played such a scurvy trick as this.'

'Have you any boy that can take this scoundrel's place?' asked Captain Lisgard impatiently.

'I have got as good riders as can be got, Master Walter, upon so short a notice; and *Menclaus* shall have the pick of them. But you know what

a devil of a temper the horse has ; and this Withers was the only lad who understood him.'

'How comes it that Blanquette has gone to look for him?' asked Derrick thoughtfully. 'Does he know where he is likely to be found?'

'Not as I know of, sir,' returned the trainer gravely. 'He said he would bring him back Dead or Alive—those were his words.'

'Stop a moment, Chifney,' ejaculated Ralph. 'I can scarcely find breath to utter even the suspicion of it; and the certainty would, I verily believe, choke me; but do you think it possible that all is not quite on the square with Blanquette himself?'

'Well, Mr Derrick, I'd rather not say. Mr Blanquette is as much the owner of the horse as yourself. He's my employer too—and nobody ever heard Tite Chifney breathe a word.'

'Thousand devils!' cried Derrick, stamping his foot so that the print of it was left in the yielding turf; 'is this a time for your senseless scruples? I ask you, do you think it possible that this man—my pal for years, one that has oftentimes faced death in my company, and once shared the last scanty meal that stood between us and starvation—do you think it possible, I say, that this man has sold the race?'

'Well, sir,' replied Mr Chifney frankly, 'about victuals eaten under the circumstances you describe, of course I'm no judge; but as to friendship and that, I've known a son play his own father false upon the turf before now; and what an Englishman will do in the way of smartness, you may take your oath a Frenchman will do—and a deuced sight worse too. Moreover, since you press this question, I may say that your partner has been seen talking with Wiley—Lord Stonart's agent—more than once.'

'And why, in the devil's name, was I not told?'

'That was not my business, Mr Derrick; you might not have thanked me for interfering with your affairs. I thought that you and Mr Blanquette were one. Besides, to confess the truth, I thought it was *The King* who was being nobbled. And since Lord Stonart has chosen to withdraw his horses from my keeping—chiefly, by the by, through his disgust at that trial-race in which his crack was beaten—I, of course, was no longer bound to look after his interests; no, indeed, quite the reverse,' added the trainer with an offended air.

'Did this Frenchman say he would be here to-day, if he did not find the boy?' inquired Captain Lisgard sharply, with an unpleasant look in his fine eyes.

'I can answer that question for him,' returned the gold-digger grimly. 'If he has played me false, he will not only not be *here*; he will have put the sea—and not the narrow one either—between himself and Ralph Derrick; for he knows me very well. But now—here he drew a long breath, and made a motion with his mighty arms as though he would dismiss that matter for the present, tempting as it was to dwell upon—'let us see the boy that is to take this rascal's place. We may pull through still with luck.'

CHAPTER XXI.—AT EPSOM.

Have you ever seen at the beginning of a Great Law Case a certain hush and stir among the gentlemen of the long robe, and then a young man rise—not much over forty, that is—and inform 'my lud' that his unfortunate client was placed at a sad disadvantage, for that, through the unexpected but

unavoidable absence of his leader, the whole case must needs devolve upon his own (the junior's) shoulders? The circumstance is of course most lamentable, but still the young counsel (if he is worth a guinea fee) has a certain confident radiance about him, for he feels that his opportunity has come at last, and that he has but 'to grasp the skirts of happy chance,' to be borne from that moment woosackwards. So was it with Mr Samuel Hicks, horse-jockey unattached, when suddenly called upon to fill the vacant seat of Brother Withers, absent without leave. To ride a Derby at a moment's notice was, to one in his position, almost what to take the command of the Mediterranean squadron would be to a young gentleman at the naval school. But not a trace of indecision was visible on the young centaur's countenance.

'I will do my best, gentlemen,' said he modestly; then added, with the irrepressible assurance of his class, 'and I think I know how to ride.'

'You know nothing, and are an infernal young fool,' returned the trainer sharply. 'You never were outside of such a horse as *Menelaus* in your life. If he is in a good temper, a child might steer him; but if he jibs—if he stands stock-still in that great race an hour hence, as he is as like to do as not—what will you do then?'

'Bless my soul, sir,' cried the boy, his golden Future—not without 'mother in a comfortable cottage, and easy for life,' let us hope, in the foreground—all swept away by this relentless prediction—'Bless my soul, sir, I think I should cut his throat.'

'I like this fellow,' cried Derrick, slapping the lad upon the back. 'Look you, here is twenty pounds, which you may keep in any case, and you had better take it now, for if you lose the race, there will be plenty of folks to want all my money. But if you win, boy, I will make it Two Hundred.'

'And I will make it Four,' added Master Walter fervently.

'So, you see, you will be a made man for life,' remarked the trainer kindly. 'But listen to me, Sam, or else all this glitter will be the merest moonshine. Be sure never touch your horse with whip or spur; for Withers, I have noticed, never did. But if the beast jibs—I saw Jack do this at the trial-race, and once before—snatch at his ear. There may be some secret in the way of handling it, but there is no time for finding that out. Do you twist it hard.'

'O sir, I'll twist it off, but he shall win,' returned the jockey plaintively; and off he went to don his new owner's colours—black and red—as proudly as an ensign to his first battle-field.

It had got about that there was some hitch about *Menelaus*, and the odds were rising rapidly against him; and when the large and somewhat ungainly animal took his preparatory canter in front of the stand under the guidance of the uncelebrated Hicks, they rose still higher. If any of his ancient confidence had remained to Captain Lisgard, he could scarcely have resisted the tempting offers that were being roared out in harsh and nasal tones from every quarter of the Ring.

'I'll lay 7 to 1 against *Many Laws*' (for most of the racing fraternity favoured Mr Derrick's pronunciation of that name); 'I'll lay 8 to 1.'

'I'll take 4 to 1. I name the Winner' (for the relation between *The King* and the French horse in the betting was that of buckets in a well).

'I take odds that *Menelaus* is not placed.'

exclaimed a shrill and sneering voice close beside where the two men most interested in that depreciated animal were standing.

'What odds will you take, my Lord?' inquired Captain Lisgard, biting his lip in wrath, for it was Lord Stonart who was offering them, the man whose confidential agent had been talking with Blanquette, and to whose machinations it was almost certainly owing that *Menelaus* had lost his rider.

'Ah, Lisgard, how are you?' returned he coolly. 'How came it that I missed you just now in the Paddock? Haven't seen you since that morning on Mirk Down. So we're going to try that race over again, eh?'

'I think you were asking for odds, my Lord, about the black horse being *placed*?' rejoined the captain, pale with passion at the sarcasm that lurked in the other's tone.

'Yes, so I was. There has something gone amiss, they say, with him. I'll take 4 to 1 in fifties—hundreds, if you like.'

'Don't do it,' whispered Derrick eagerly. 'Don't you see what the scoundrel reckons upon? If the horse runs straight, he will win the race, but if he jibs, he will be nowhere. He is therefore taking odds where he ought to give them.'

'You don't take me, eh?' continued his Lordship. 'Well, I think your friend advises you wisely. See the horses are moving towards the hill. Like myself, you have no stall, I conclude. Where are you going to place yourself? I think I shall remain below here on the green.'

'Then I shall see the race from the roof, my Lord,' answered the captain savagely, and thither he and his companion betook themselves accordingly.

To look down from that elevation upon Epsom Downs just before the start for the Great Race, is to behold a wondrous spectacle. Men—a quarter of a million or so—as black and thick as bees, and emitting much such a hum and clangour as attends the swarming of those perilous insects; and the carriages, twelve deep—dwarfed to much the same proportions as those chariots which used to be dragged in public by the Industrious Fleas. But raise your race-glass, and with a single sweep you survey every social degree of human life; from the duchess to the poor drunken hag on the look-out for empty bottles; from the peer to the ragged thief who bides his moment to snatch his booty from his Lordship's carriage-seat. This rascal's opportunity is coming. If there are five minutes in an Englishman's life in which he is indifferent to the preservation of his property, it is those five which are now at hand when that little jockey rainbow yonder is gathering on the hill. Thirty of the fleetest horses in the world are about to contend for the greatest prize that horse can win: it is not that circumstance, however, which makes so many hearts go pit-a-pat, keeps all lips sealed, and rivets every eye, except that of the pickpocket and his natural enemy the policeman, upon that shifting speck of colour. All are aware of the enormous interests that hang upon the result impending, even if they have none themselves; vague but gigantic shadows of loss and gain forecast themselves upon every mind. In a few seconds more, certain unknown scoundrels—fellow-creatures, however, with whom we have indissoluble sympathies—will be enriched beyond the dreams of avarice; and certain other poor devils will be ruined. A solemn hush pervades all

Pandemonium. The very organ-grinders cease their hateful discord; the vendors of race-cards give their lungs brief respite; the proprietors of *Aunt Sallys* intermit their useless cry of 'Three throws a penny,' and stand on tiptoe, with their *fascies* beneath their arms, as eager as my Lord who totters insecure erect upon the front seat of his drag. Nervous folks see all these things because they cannot keep their eyes fixed where they would. A sudden roar breaks forth, not in the least like human speech, but it means that They are Off!

'Are they off, Ralph?' inquires Master Walter of his companion, 'or is it a lie?' His small and well-gloved hand is trembling so, that his race-glass gives him views like a kaleidoscope. Splendour or Penury—nay, worse, or Shame await him, and are at the threshold. He knows not yet the foot of which it is that draws so nigh; and he dares not look forth to see.

'They are not off yet, lad,' returned Ralph; and even he has to swallow something which appears to be in his throat, but is not, before he can give that assurance.

Master Walter draws a long breath, for this is a reprieve, and endeavours once more to fix his eyes upon the dancing horses; but it is the retina of the mind only which presents its image. He beholds his mother's face, paler and more careworn than ever, sharpened with pain, through something which she has learned since—

'They're off! they're off!' is again the cry; and this time the great plane of faces shifts and flashes as it follows the speck of colour now in rapid motion—at first, a double line, next a lengthening oval, and then a string of brilliants, knotted here and there. As they approach Tattenham Corner, Walter perceives, for the first time, that they are horses, and that three are leading all the rest—Green, Black, and Yellow. The chances are then but two to one against him. How they lag and crawl, these vaunted coursers of the air! How long is this frightful suspense to last? 'The Yellow's beat—*Mica* is out of it—the Black wins—the favourite is beaten, blast him!—*Menelaus* wins!' There is a thunder of hoofs, a flash of Black and Green, then a cry such as, even on Epsom Downs, was never before heard. 'By Heaven, he's off! The boy is killed! Was it short of the post? What number's up? The Green has won. *The King, The King!* Hurrah, hurrah!' And so the babblement breaks forth again, and the tumultuous crowd flows in like water upon the fair green course, save one small space of it kept clear by men with staves, where lies a poor whitefaced jockey, senseless and motionless, for whose misfortune everybody is sorry, but especially those who have backed the Black.

All had gone well with the French horse until within a few strides of the winning-post; he was leading by half a length, and his victory seemed certain to all eyes, when suddenly—whether through the devilish nature of the beast, or whether poor Sam had touched him with the heel in that overwhelming crisis, can never now be known—but he stopped stock-still, and shot his rider (snatching at his ear as he flew by) a dozen yards, like cricket-ball from catapult. The uncelebrated Hicks had actually preceded the rival jockey at the post, but left his horse behind him; and there the beast was standing yet, with his fore-feet planted resolutely before him, and his untwisted ears laid level with his neck, as though he was giving 'a back' at leap-frog.

'Come down, and let us get away from this, lad,' broke forth Derrick impatiently: 'it is no use waiting here.'

'It is no use waiting here,' echoed the young man mechanically, as he followed his friend through the fast-thinning crowd down to the basement story.

At the foot of the staircase they met Mr Chifney, looking very white and disconcerted. He, too, had put more trust than he was wont to place in horses in *Menelaus*, and had suffered in consequence; and the wily trainer was not used to losses.

'How is the boy?' inquired Derrick.

'Bad, sir, bad: it is a bad business altogether,' muttered the man of horseflesh, not perhaps wholly thinking of the boy.

'It was not his fault, however,' continued Ralph. 'No man could have kept his seat during such a devil's trick. Look you, let him have all he requires; everything. I will be responsible.'

Mr Chifney had expected from this stormy client some terrible outbreak of wrath and disappointment; and lo, he was all benevolence and charity! His astonishment exhibited itself significantly enough in his face; but Ralph mistook the cause.

'Why do you stare so, sir? I suppose I am good for a few pounds yet. The horse is mine; and I apprehend will be security enough; though I wish I could afford to shoot him—cursed beast! Where is Lord Stonart?'

'A Great Personage has, I have heard, just sent for him, to offer his congratulations.'

Ralph Derrick uttered a harsh and bitter laugh.

'I suppose we couldn't see this interesting interview, eh?'

'Certainly not, sir,' replied the trainer hurriedly, alarmed by Derrick's tone and air. 'I hope you are not thinking of putting us all in the wrong by any act of violence?'

'Well, no; I thought of conferring the honour of knighthood upon his Lordship with a horsewhip—that's all.'

'Take him away,' whispered the trainer to Master Walter; 'for Heaven's sake, take him home.'

'Yes, home. Come home, Ralph,' repeated the young man, like one in a dream.

'Ha, Lisgard, how goes it?' drawled Captain Wobegon, sauntering slowly up to where the three were standing. 'I hope you recouped yourself for last night's misfortunes by *The King* just now. Devilish near thing, though. The Frenchman did win by a head, but luckily it was the boy's, and not his own.'

'I backed the wrong horse,' returned Master Walter gloomily. 'And I owe you—how much is it?'

'A little over fourteen hundred. If it's any convenience to you, I can wait a fortnight or so; I would say longer—but Lurline—she was inquiring after you, only yesterday, by the by; I felt quite jealous—has a soul above economy. And after the Derby, you know, folks send in their bills; especially jewellers. They know if they are not paid then, it's a bad look-out. What a lot that fellow Stonart must have netted! I'm sorry to see you so down in the mouth; you used to be such a lucky fellow.'

'Used to be such a lucky fellow,' mused Master Walter, as he and his companion made their way to the outskirts of the heath, where a place had been appointed at which their Hansom was to wait

for them. 'Yes, so I was. I used to win in a small way, and yet people were always glad to see me. They won't be so pleasant, I reckon, when they find that I am a defaulter. I can't get at any money for a year, and who'll wait a year without making a row? Even if they do, mine will be a fine coming of age. How could I have been such a frightful fool?'

'Tell your fortune, my pretty gentleman,' observed a gipsy girl, laying her walnut-coloured fingers upon the young man's coat-sleeve. 'You are born under a lucky star.'

'I may have been born there; but I have wandered far away from its influence,' replied Master Walter, shaking her hand off somewhat roughly. 'If you want a shilling, you shall have it; for I have nothing but other people's money about me, and that one always parts with very readily. But don't call me lucky, for that's a lie, you jade.'

'Bless your handsome face,' returned the gipsy humbly, 'it's a shame that it ever should be crossed by the shadow of sorrow. You can't be unlucky, sir, with eyes like yours—especially,' added she, as the two strode hastily away, 'especially among the ladies.'

'Do you hear that, lad?' laughed Derrick encouragingly; but the young man was too wrapt up in his own sombre thoughts to heed such things.

'I must sell out,' muttered he to himself; 'that's the first thing. And I must run down to Mirk; there is no knowing what that spitfire there may do else.'

'Here's our Hansom, and the fellow not drunk for a wonder!' exclaimed Derrick. 'Where's the horse, man?'

'In this next booth, sir,' returned the driver. 'I will put him to in no time.—I am afraid your honours have not won.'

'See, Walter, lad,' cried Derrick in remonstrance; 'that's your fault. Don't hang out such signals of distress that everybody who meets us offers their confounded pity. Be a man, lad; be a man. Besides, what did that gipsy girl say just now? Many a wise word is spoken in jest. She said, with your good looks, that you must needs be lucky with the women. I should like to see the heiress who would say "No" to Captain Walter Lisgard. A good marriage would mend all this, and'—

'Go to the devil!' exclaimed the young man passionately.

'You are out of temper, lad,' returned the other gravely; 'but don't say those sort of things to me, for I have not deserved them.'

'Not deserved them! you have been my ruin, curse you!' continued the other with vehemence. 'But for you, you drunken!—'

'Take you care, Walter Lisgard!' roared the bearded man in a voice of thunder. 'Do not make me strike you, for I would as soon strike my son. How can all this be my fault? Do you suppose that I have not lost also—almost all I have in the world save a few hundreds?'

'Ay, mine, I suppose,' exclaimed Walter bitterly. 'I know I owe you a thousand pounds.'

'Yea,' returned the other, producing his pocket-book, 'here are three I.O.U.s bearing your signature, for two, three, and five hundred pounds.'

'You shall be paid, sir, never fear,' rejoined the young man insolently. 'No man but you, however, would have produced them at such a time. But it serves me right for herding with such people.'

'Thank you, young man. At the same time, few of your fine gentlemen would treat them this way.' Thus saying, he tore them into little strips, and scattered them to the wind.—'All I ask, by way of repayment, now is, that you will listen to a few words I have to say. I have loved you, Walter Lisgard, in spite of yourself, and would have laid down my life for yours. I have concealed from my own heart as well as I could the selfish baseness that underlies your every act—but that is over now. Look you, on the coasts where I have come from, there is many a bay which, if you saw it at high tide, you would say: "What a beautiful harbour! what smooth and smiling water! This is a place for all men to cast anchor." But when the tide is going out, you see how you have been deceived. Here is a reef that would wreck a navy; here is a jagged and cruel rock, and there another and another. With every one, you say to yourself, surely this is the last. But for this and for that, there was never a better anchorage; and how beautiful the place is! What luxuriant foliage—what exquisite verdure fringes the shore—just the shores, you know. But when the tide is quite out, it is impossible to like the place any longer. There are nothing *but* reefs and rocks to be seen then, and a few loathsome reptiles among the slime. Now, Walter Lisgard, I have come upon you at dead low-water, and I don't wish to meet you any more. You will deceive others, of course, who may see you at the flow, but you will never deceive me. I shall go down to Mirk, after a little, to bring away my wife. Take my advice, and don't be there. Above all things, see that your mother does not cross me in that matter, or it will be worse for all concerned. I have nobody now in the world who cares for me save Mary Forest, and they shall not rob me of her. Here is the Hansom in which we can no longer sit together. You are not used to walking, being what is called a gentleman, so you had better take it. All I ask you is, to leave our lodgings before I reach them, since you will arrive there first; or if not—I will take myself off elsewhere; I should be sorry to be under the same roof, with you again, young man.'

Then pulling his hat forward upon his brow, in place of farewell, Ralph Derrick turned his back upon Walter Lisgard, and took his way to town on foot. As the captain, sitting alone in no very enviable frame of mind, passed him afterwards upon the road, he could not help remarking to himself how old and bowed the insolent fellow looked.

HAPPY HOMES.*

THE condition of multitudes of the manual labouring-classes in this country is a reproach to our modern and somewhat boasted civilisation. It has attracted attention, however, far more than at any former time, and good hopes may therefore be entertained. Earnest efforts are also being made in various ways for its improvement, and with some measure of success. Ministers of every denomination, city missionaries, and Sunday-school teachers, labour in the cause of religion. Many exert themselves to diffuse the blessings of education. Others devote their energies chiefly to the promotion of

temperance. But all these find a great obstacle to their success in the densely-crowded state of the poorer districts of towns, and the want of that space and accommodation in the houses of the working-classes, both in town and country, which are necessary for the purposes of family life. If the inhabitants of narrow lanes, which the sunshine scarcely enters, and where the pure air of heaven cannot circulate, draw in poison with their breath, and fevers and consumption and a long train of diseases are the consequence, not less certain is it that the moral atmosphere which surrounds them is pernicious. The members of decent families, unhappily reduced to the necessity of living in such situations, are brought into close contact with the most depraved of human beings, and are familiarised from childhood with every idea of vice. The houses afford no place of retirement for reading, for self-improvement of any kind, or for devotion; and do not even admit of the observance of that decency without which a proper tone of moral feeling cannot subsist. Dr Begg well says: 'Man must have not only a covering, but a HOME. God made men in families; and it is upon the right maintenance and ordering of these little kingdoms that the peace and social order of the great kingdoms of the world depend.'

Because their habitations are not fit for homes, the circumstances in which tens of thousands of families in Britain live at the present day, powerfully tend to degradation and vice. Nor is the evil confined to towns. It exists to a great extent also in villages, through the mistaken policy of landowners, who dread an increase of the village population, and of consequent pauperism. Sites for houses are therefore refused, and the result is, that new buildings are erected within the space to which the village is confined, where formerly there were gardens; and worse still, the existing houses are made to accommodate a greater number of families, and are crowded with lodgers. Pauperism is increased by the very means taken to prevent it, for vice and disease become more prevalent, and both produce it. And even in strictly agricultural districts, the houses of labourers are often mere hovels, not half so well adapted to the wants of human beings as the stables, byres, and pig-sties are to those of the brutes for which they are intended.

Dr Begg calls attention, in the little volume now under our notice, to statistical returns obtained at the census of 1861, concerning house-accommodation in Scotland, from which it appears that there were at that date 666,786 inhabited houses in Scotland; and of these, 246,601 consisted of only two rooms, 226,723 of only one room, and 7964 houses were without windows! In Edinburgh, one hundred and twenty-one families lived in houses of one room, without a window; in Glasgow, two hundred and forty-one. About fifty thousand of the population of Edinburgh, and about one hundred thousand of the population of Glasgow, lived in houses of one room; many of these houses containing six, seven, or eight persons, and some of them a greater number, even up to fifteen. There is no reason to think that the state of things is better in England, although no such statistical returns were obtained for England, and it is due to Dr Begg to state that it was very much through his energetic exertions, in urging the subject upon the attention of government, and moving others to do so, that they were obtained for

* *Happy Homes for Working-men, and how to get them.* By James Begg, D.D. London: Cassell, Petter, and Galpin. 1866.

Scotland. They exhibit in a striking manner the appalling magnitude of an evil, which demands the serious attention of statesmen and philanthropists.

It is not too much to demand that cottages of at least two or three apartments should be provided for agricultural labourers, and these not erected, as is too often the case, in damp situations, without the slightest attempt at drainage. To this extent, surely, the legislature might interfere, requiring all landowners to do what some have already done of their own accord. It is reasonable to say that where a manufacturing or mining village has sprung up, facilities should be given for the erection of the needful number of houses. A landowner may take his own way in the first instance; but if he finds it to his profit to have mines or manufactories on his estate, he ought to be regarded as having committed himself to the granting of sites for houses on fair and reasonable terms. The public interest requires it. In like manner, the extension of towns over a greater area ought not to be arrested at the mere pleasure of individuals. It is a great public improvement, and Dr Begg properly contends that provision ought to be made for it as for other great public improvements, and that ground should be taken for it, if necessary, without consent of the owners, at a fair price, as it is for railways. Otherwise, the difficulties in the way may often be found insuperable, and the population of fever-haunted lanes may remain as dense as it is, social reform may be prevented, and multitudes left to vice and misery.

At the present moment, a great project is entertained in Edinburgh, the opening up of some of the worst districts of the Old Town by new streets, and by the widening of lanes or closes. The Lord Provost, who has recently entered on his office, has taken the lead in the movement for this purpose, and calculates that if the proposed improvements are effected, three hundred lives will be saved annually—a calculation which is probably within the mark—whilst great benefit may be expected as to morality and religion. But what is to become of the actual inhabitants of the districts which are to be improved? They must find houses elsewhere, and these houses must be built. The progress of the alterations must not be so rapid as to throw them out of their present abodes, however miserable these may be, before there is room for them in new ones. Too much of this has taken place already, particularly in towns through which railways have been carried, and with the result of a more grievous overcrowding than before. The question now arises, how the additional house-accommodation is to be provided? It is this question which Dr Begg undertakes to answer in the present work, and not with special reference to the projected improvements in Edinburgh, but generally with a view to the improvement of all towns, and of the condition of the working-classes. He regards the erection of houses for the working-classes to anything like the extent necessary, as an enterprise too vast for mere benevolent effort, even if this were the way in which it could be most beneficially done. He thinks it unlikely ever to be accomplished by speculators seeking their own advantage in the investment of money, because this kind of property is far from being one of the most desirable of investments; whilst the rents, which, for their own security, speculators in house-building must

demand, are a heavy drain on the limited resources of their tenants. He urges upon working-men the consideration of the advantage which they would derive from building houses for themselves; he urges upon the whole community the duty of seeking to secure for them every possible facility of doing so. He refers to the success which has attended the *Freehold Land and Building Societies* of Birmingham and other towns in England, societies which had their origin in a political motive, but have been the means of accomplishing what is already a great social reformation. He adduces also the example of the *Co-operative Building Company* of Edinburgh, the first of its kind in Scotland, and formed so recently as the year 1861, but which has already erected one hundred and fifty-nine excellent workmen's houses, and has forty more in progress, the houses being almost always eagerly purchased as soon as they are finished, or even before they are finished, and generally by men who obtain money for that purpose from a Property Investment Society. The price of a house, with a small garden, in a pleasant suburban situation, is L.130, of which L.125 is obtained from a Property Investment Company; so that a man can enter at once into possession of it who has, besides the furniture, L.5 in the savings-bank for a first instalment of the price, and about L.3 for the expense of title-deeds. And by an annual payment of about L.13 to the Property Investment Company, which is only about L.2 a year more than the annual rent of such a house, he can make it absolutely his own in fourteen years. What an encouragement to economy and temperance, and every good habit! And what a difference to a family in that commodious house, with its little garden, and its quiet, decent neighbourhood, from the miserable crowded lane, reeking with filth and vice!

The scheme is indeed an admirable one, and the best interests of the country are concerned in its promotion. It has sprung up gradually, and as it were naturally; it is not the creation of any individual mind. Dr Begg, along with others, has the merit of having early perceived its excellence; and to his energy in explaining and recommending it, the beginning of its adoption in Scotland is very much to be ascribed. Much may still be done by explaining and recommending it everywhere; but much needs also to be done in the removal of obstacles out of the way. These obstacles arise chiefly from two causes: the difficulty of obtaining land, to which reference has already been made; and the expense of obtaining a legal title to what is called in Scotland 'heritable property,' and in England 'real estate.' This expense is unreasonably great, and in Scotland it is much greater than in England, although recent acts of parliament have done something to diminish it. In England, also, there are different tenures of land; *copyhold* in one place, and *freehold* in another; and in consequence of this difference, the building of houses by working-men has not yet made progress at Manchester as it has done at Birmingham and some other towns. The copyhold system most nearly resembles that universally prevalent in Scotland. The freehold system is the most simple and natural; and little more is to be desired than an extension of it to all parts of the United Kingdom. The relics of feudalism are a barrier to progress; and the ruins and rubbish cannot too soon be cleared out of the way.

It is not to be hoped, as to many of the

inhabitants of the worst districts of cities, that they will seek to avail themselves of any facilities for building houses of their own. Some would, who are now compelled to live there. And as to those who would not, a great improvement in their circumstances would be indirectly effected. It is thus that we may hope for a general change. And when the overcrowding begins to be diminished, means, now comparatively powerless, will be found to be powerful. The temptations to intemperance would not be felt in the same degree, and the diminution of intemperance would prove favourable to all that is good. There can be no doubt that much temptation to intemperance arises from the want of proper house-accommodation, and the consequent want of the delights of home-life; much also from the exhausting effects of a vitiated atmosphere, producing a craving for stimulants. In both respects, a diminished density of population would be most beneficial in its results. And many of the difficulties which now stand in the way of the progress of education and of religion would vanish.

KAILIE STORIES.

THE word *kailie* is Gaelic, and appears to signify primarily 'a pilgrimage' or 'visiting.' It is used secondarily to signify 'gossiping,' but never in a contemptuous sense. But it is more particularly applied to a custom universal in the Highlands, and still, to a certain extent, kept up in the remoter parts of the low country, of neighbours within a certain range of district congregating in the house of one of their community, to pass the night in the social interchange of good cheer, and particularly in singing songs and telling stories, while all kinds of indoor work are at the same time carried on. All the houses of the neighbourhood are reckoned to be alternately free and common to the observers of this custom, but usually some particular two or three are adhered to in preference to others. Modern ideas are no doubt displacing the custom, and it will perhaps soon be unknown. It would take a long chapter to describe the usual incidents that occur, but it is a pity that some attempt should not be made to collect the pictures of common life, and the current lore, that are constantly passing and repassing at such gatherings. The following stories, which all belong to the north of Scotland, are merely intended to give some idea of the sort of spirit that is usually indulged in among the 'gossips.' *Kailler* is 'a man-teller,' and *kailteh* 'a woman-teller.'

KAILTER MR HUTCHESON.

I remember hearing, when I was a boy, a story told of a neighbouring minister, who, not being much distinguished for his own abilities in sermonising, thought he might begin and substitute the composition of some of our worthy divines for his own, and preach them—no doubt through a conscientious zeal for their spiritual welfare—to his admiring little flock. One day he happened to be declaiming with more than his wonted animation, and appeared to think his oratory was taking admirable effect, when his fiery chariot was stopped in mid-career by a voice singing out: '*That's Boston!*' At once, he stood as if transfixed by a lightning-stroke. But recovering himself, and thinking to annihilate the still ringing echoes of 'that voice of Satan' by the thunder of his own, he charged sublimely into his subject again,

and rose on the wings of the tempest as before. But he was no sooner at top-speed again, than the air rung with: '*That's Baxter!*' For a moment, the gowned hero stood paralysed, but only for a moment. Maddened by this second attack, he plunged forward again with all the fierceness of despair; his mouth began to foam; his eyes glared through his dishevelled hair; his arms flew about like the tails of a herd of oxen in midsummer; and his body writhed like a serpent over a fire. While this was going on in such a way as might have produced the desired effect, the hated interruption once more broke forth. This was now become unendurable. 'Put out that man!—vile limb of the devil!' roared the infuriated minister. 'That's your ain noo!' retorted his incorrigible tormentor, for the fourth and last time. Never afterwards was the minister known to borrow a sentence, but preached such discourses as were unanimously pronounced—even by the censorious yeoman—to be his own.

KAILTEH MRS HUTCHESON.

A tailor made a wager that he would make a pair of hose in the pulpit of a certain Church. He was not to enter the church until dark, and he was to have the hose done at twelve o'clock, or, at any rate, was to continue working at them until midnight. When the night was far advanced, and the tailor was becoming a little *eriee* as to the peculiarity of his position, his attention was roused by a slight hissing noise in the body of the church, and lifting up his eyes, he beheld a long, white, bony figure rise in the middle of the building, apparently from under the ground, which, raising its right arm, presently began addressing him. 'Look, thou vile reptile, that comest here to insult the dead at rest, and defile the sanctuary of God! look here! know that thou shalt not mock with impunity the silent sleep of the departed! Dost thou see this right arm? there is on it neither flesh nor blood, nor is there now, nor has there been for many a day.'—'I see that, and I sew this,' rejoined the tailor. Holding up his left arm, the figure repeated the same, then his right leg, and then his left, and the tailor answered each time with the same rejoinder. It struck twelve, and the tailor was done. The figure approached him, with the ominous words: 'As thou hast seen, so shalt thou feel.' The tailor leaps up, and takes to flight, the figure chasing, when, just at the door, and as the tailor gave a bound out of the church, the figure strikes at him with his right hand, but missing him, and hitting the door-pillar, he leaves the mark of his hand; and there the mark of the 'devil's' five fingers are unto this day. The tailor heard the blow behind him, and then the figure vanished in a blaze which singed the tailor's skin; and never more till the day of his death had the tailor a hair on any part of his body, or had he a shadow.

KAILTER MR HUTCHESON.

An old woman of the parish of — was so indecorous as one day to allow her pig—which was a pet—to follow her to church, and not only to the church, but *into* it. In due time, the services began by the minister giving out a psalm, during which time grumpy was as quiet as it was possible for her nature to be, being nestled quite close to the feet of her owner, and only disturbing a few sensitive ladies by an occasional low grunt

of self-congratulation. But when the psalm began to be sung, grumphy pricked up her ears, gave a loud snort or two, by way of clearing her throat, or ascertaining the proper key-note, and then struck boldly in with the general voice. The tune, of course, she did not strictly follow, and not believing in the measures, she lengthened them out a note or two, by way of refrain, at each of which the man in the gown half rose and peeped over the pulpit. The singing over, the minister rose to pray. But grumphy, still thinking it her duty not to be silent, struck in every time the good man gave a fervent exclamation, supporting it in the same key with great emphasis. This state of matters continued for some time, much to the merriment of the youngsters, and not much to the credit of the elder people, who all of them seemed afraid of loosing the tongue of Mrs Graymantle by silencing that of her fourfooted friend. This at last roused the worthy minister, who did not relish his every sentence being chorused in such a fashion, and leaning over the pulpit, he thus apostrophised the beadle: 'Tak awa' that pig, and the owner o' the pig; tak them as far as such a place, and if you get a stane upon them, guid and weel, and haste you back to worship.'

KAILTER SANNERS BAIN.

I returned hame ae day, and found Tam Macphail waitin' for me in the hoose, readin' a beuk. 'Weel, Tam,' says I, 'I'm gled to see you sae weel employed; ye seem to be very muckle interestid in that beuk; let me see—I think that's Fox's *Beuk o' Martyrs*.'

'Ay, troth is't,' says Tam; 'and a capital beuk it is. I hae been readin' it here this mair than an oor, and I think mair o' it the langer I leuk at it. God-a-mercy, what pictures, man! Lordsakes! leuk, here's ae chiel boran oot anither ane's e'e wi' an 'imble. My troth! I think it's a beuk. Ye maun gie me the len o' it, Sanners; I'll tak guid care o' it, fearna ye.'

'Weel, we shall see,' says I. 'But foo hae ye been this lang time? I haena seen you for ooks. Foo is the guidwife? I houp Jeanie's knee is better.'

'Nae a muckle better o' it,' says Tam; 'we are a' weel else but this. Tibbie yonner was speakin' about a doctor, and priggin' sair wi' me this mornin' to alloo her to sen' for ane. But of coorse ye ken my opinions on that subjick, that I hae nae faith in sic astrologers and soothsayin' hypocrites, wi' their fiddlem-diddlem-lotions-potions-notions-nonsense. But ye ken, Sanners, it's the kind o' no respectable-like, for ae thing, and, anither thing, if it should come to waur, or end in warst (whilk Gude forfend!), and although it woulдна be true neither, fowks would lay the blame and cause o' a' agin me. So my principal errand here was to see if ye would do me a particular favour in this maitter, whilk is to gae and ca' on Tibbie, just as if ye gaed o' your ain accord, to speir for Jeanie, and of coorse Tibbie'll explain it a', and ax your advice, and speir if she shouldna send for a doctor, and misca' me, and sic-like. Then ye can tak up the string wi' her, and tell her seriously to get a doctor (deil tak him!) immedantly, and that ye'll tak me in hand about it, and stand atween her and a' consequences. And, Sanners, ye'll settle wi' the doctor, and I'll settle wi' ye (but that's atween oorsells); sae that'll keep things trig and snod. Ye see I dinna want them to ken that I think

anything o' the accident; but I'm afeard it's no to be ow'r muckle lippened to.'

KAILTER PETER GRANT.

Tam Shaw went to the market to sell his mare, for the same reason that some people seek to divorce their other half; but instead of acting the part of a rascally cheating jockey, by representing his animal to be everything it was not, Tam's object was to do honestly. So, when would-be buyers gathered round to look at the 'beast,' guidman Tam cried out: 'Haud oot ow'r, haud oot ow'r!—if ye care for life and hale banes, haud oot ow'r! I hae to put on the harness on her every day wi' the pitchfork' (spoken very quickly and vehemently); and thereupon, in a way as if he did not want people to see, he began tickling the 'beast,' to prove his word by ocular demonstration. The *ruse* took. Some one, thinking the matter was all a joke, and the man just a 'queer one,' bought the animal at once. Next day, 'the gowkit idiot,' as Tam said, 'tried to put back the beast, "for," says he, "a' ye said was true." And do you mean to say ye ever dooted my word, sir? says I to him.'

KAILTEH MEG MURRAY.

When ow'r the fire ye place the kettle,
And want your bree to be smoke free,
O' clean white saut, a chosen pickle,
Lay on the lid, and say *Forbid*.

KAILTEH MRS ROSE.

The Bible was considered by the old folks as a depository of all knowledge of everything that ever was, or is, or should be known. The common belief appeared to be that everything good or natural was to be found in the Bible, and whatever was not found in it, ought not to be. In warning young folk of anything that was thought hurtful or wrong, the reason assigned would be that it was forbidden: 'Such a thing is forbidden;' and if asked: 'Where forbidden?' the reply invariably came: 'Where but in the Bible?' As a universal refuge for ignorance, anything that could not be accounted for was said to belong to the hidden mysteries of the Bible; and any old saw, common saying, or story that could not be otherwise authenticated, was at once referred to the Bible. If any doubt should be expressed as to such or such a thing being really in the Bible, the reply would be: 'Nae fear it's in't, gin 'twould be foun' oot.' Ignorance on any subject supposed to be very commonly known, was held as shewing great want of knowledge of the Bible. I remember old Hugh Roy, who was noted as a great Christian in his day, once asking a beggar, who was relating to him a story about the *water-kelpies*, what he understood these to be. 'Losh, man!' replied the beggar, 'but ye're ignorant o' your Bible, when ye dinna ken about the water-kelpies!'

KAILTEH MRS MACWATT.

An old lady called one morning on Eneas Ross at rather an early, and, as it proved, unseasonable hour, for the purpose of paying her account with the guidman, and, without much ceremony, tabled the money; whereupon Eneas, rising, seized 'the root of all evil,' and with the greatest disgust, flung it to the other side of the room, with this reply to his visitor: 'Do you think I am to do homage to that vile worldly trash before I bow down before my Maker? Get thee behind me, Mammon!'

KAILTEH MRS HUTCHESON.

Dr Maccoll and Mr Mackimmie having gone one time into the far west to preach, were so inhospitably received by the people of the place, because, as they afterwards learned, they were taken for excisemen, that they could not so much as get night-lodging. No one would receive them. At length, however, though very reluctantly, they were directed to the dwelling of an old woman far up amongst the hills, and were, moreover, furnished with a guide. Arrived at the old woman's house, their guide announced them, with a word of explanation in his own way, and took his leave. Here they were indeed received, but with a very ill grace. Their hostess remarked to them, that if they wanted food, there was some sowens that her other people had left, and if they liked to take that and milk, they could take it. It was rather cold refreshment, but they took it, and were glad to get it. Having despatched their repast, they asked the old dame if they could have grass for their horses. To this she replied, that she had grass, away in the park on the southern shoulder of the hill; but if they wanted any, they would have to shear it themselves.

'We'll do that,' rejoined Dr Maccoll, in great glee, and thereupon started for the southernmost shoulder of the hill.

'O doctor!' said Mr Mackimmie, running up to him, 'I can't shear—I can't shear!'

'But I'll shear it,' said the doctor; 'and you'll carry it home on your back.'

In the morning, at the first peep of dawn, they were roused from their slumbers by their old hostess thumping at the door. 'Rise—rise!' cried she.

'Why so soon?' they replied.

'That's my business,' said the old dame; 'but if ye want to know, rise and see; may be, too, it may be something in your own way of business—ye'd better look sharp, hadn't ye?'

To this they replied by tossing themselves in the bed, as if they essayed to rise; but being nowise tired of the blankets yet, for they had had but a few hours of sleep, and not feeling that they had rested enough for the fatigues of the previous day, they were loath to rub their drowsy eyes. But the old lady was not to be diverted. She returned again, something louder than before, and, to urge her request, became so condescending as to explain part of her reasons, and to say that it was necessary for them to get up without more ado, for she was going to hear a great minister from the east country, and she had all her gear to put right before she could go; but she must go, come of everything that might; and if they wanted a breakfast, they must take it then, or none, for she wanted them out of the way, and no more ado. This was plain-dealing; and making a virtue of necessity, they rose, and proceeded to avail themselves of the breakfast, which consisted of two 'bickers' of oaten 'porritch,' and milk, and barley-cakes. Then, having finished their meal, they got themselves 'out of the way.'

At the hour for beginning the services, Dr Maccoll stood up in the minister's box (there was no church), to the astonishment and dismay of not a few, but to the utter bewilderment and terror of the old lady, the doctor's hostess. The sermon she bided, but immediately thereafter she ran home, scrubbed and scoured the room, brought forth her

best and most precious gear, breaking at the same time some dear articles thereof, and when her guests returned, the old lady, now writhing like a roasting eel, ushered them into a room that made the ministers stare, and having made them sit down to a table covered and groaning with the mountain produce, and all the most esteemed Highland luxuries, overwhelmed them with courtesy and kindness.

S E A - V I E W.

I.—DAY.

THE ships seem hanging in the air,
Through the haze and through the mist;
And the sea and the horizon
Are cloudy amethyst,
Till the keen rays pierce and sever
The veil before the sun,
When the ripples dance, and sparkles
Break forth from every one.

And the crescents and the churches,
Long looming through the gray,
Appear piled up in brightness
Of the expanding day;
And the pier, with arms extended,
Seems welcoming the ships,
And the red buoy to the southward,
On the foam-crest shines and dips,

As the little tawny vessels,
Umber, and yellow, and black,
Come skimming round the foreland
Upon the frigate's track,
Scattered like sheep a-feeding,
Over the glistening tide,
And the galley's oars like pinions
Of an albatross spread wide.

II.—NIGHT.

All day the sunbeams' shadow chased
Along the white cliff fleet,
Till the red light's fading westward
Where the clover's dewy sweet;
Till the surf's white fire rolls beating
Against the jetty wall,
And you hear the ship-bells sharply
To the absent sailors call.

And when the stars are sparkling,
The harbour's emerald flame
Shines to the ships returning
To the port from whence they came;
And the church-clock mourns so gravely
The passing of the hour,
And the moon in the blue sky ruling,
Shines with a fuller power.

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